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Magnificentia principis. Brühl's Artistic Activities in Poland as a Means of Political Self-Propaganda

"Wir sind alle Schauspieler, es kommt nur darauf an, gut seine Rolle spielen"¹. This revealing quotation from Heinrich von Brühl forms the introduction to a novel by Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, dedicated to the early period at the court of Augustus III of the later powerful minister. Throughout his impressive career, he mastered different kinds of role-playing; the notion of theatricality and expected splendour essential for display of power and magnificence were significant elements in his artistic policy.

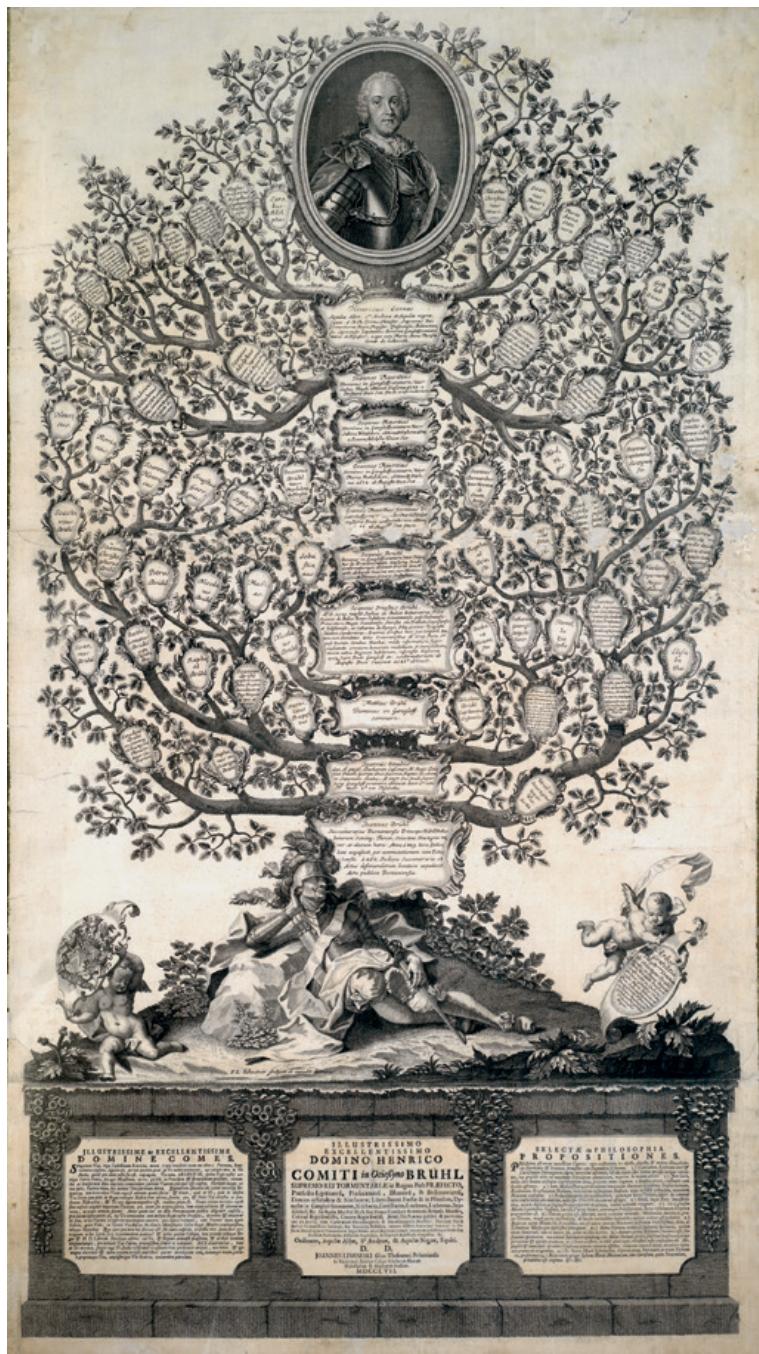
During the years of his activity in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania, Brühl was neither a popular nor a respected politician, while aversion to the Saxon minister escalated hand in hand with his efficient collection of subsequent honours and estates. By his death in 1763, along with administering several lucrative Crown lands, he held approximately thirty offices in Poland, which made him more of an institution than a minister². Brühl was generally regarded as a usurper of power, an alien who threatened traditional privileges of the Polish nobility and illegally accumulated substantial wealth, hence his role as an art amateur remained in the shadow of his political status. Frequently accused of interfering with Poland's domestic affairs, Brühl became a symbol of the unrestrained exercise of power³. Brühl's notorious reputation was born already before the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, and shaped through circulating anonymous publications discrediting the minister and his policy⁴. Johann Heinrich von Justi's critical biography⁵, which promoted the image of Brühl's despotism and contrasted his rule with an effective governmental administration, proved to be popular in Poland and contributed to the political demise of the count. In 1774, the characteristics of the minister were summarized in the following verse: a "dangerous favourite, who in the shadow of a monarch planted seeds of unrest"⁶. The negative connotations were subsequently repeated, in literature by Kraszewski or in historiography by Władysław Konopczyński⁷.

My interest lies in the background to Brühl's struggle for the legitimacy of his status in the Commonwealth, which he wanted to raise to the level that he had achieved in Saxony. He deployed varied and extensive artistic endeavours to achieve this aim, and my goal is to highlight their features. While around 1749 – 1750 Brühl's "ministerial system" reached its climax and

the Saxon prime minister emerged as the first person in the Electorate⁸, in the late 1740s he began his quest for influence and fortune in Poland, initially in alliance with powerful magnates (the party of the Czartoryski family), and after 1752/1754, in conspicuous rivalry with them. In the public perception, however, his high rank on the Polish political stage was neither undisputed nor firm.

Originally as a foreigner Brühl was originally forbidden by law to buy estates, hold offices, and gain substantial profits from administering Crown lands. His first political objective thus involved gaining formal recognition of his noble title, which he hoped to achieve in 1749. Confirmation of foreign noble rank (Polish *indygenat*) awarded the legal status of a member of the Polish nobility together with its privileges. From 1641 onward, this right was reserved only for the parliament and was not easy to obtain. Brühl's brilliant concept involved acquiring *indygenat* from Courland as a vassal state of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which he achieved in February 1746⁹, the year he also became the omnipotent prime minister in Saxony. As a naturalized noble, he soon made use of his right to purchase land; already in November 1746 Brühl and his wife bought a piece of ground at Nowy wiat in the suburbs of Warsaw¹⁰. However, the status granted by *indygenat* did not automatically include all the rights of a Polish-born noble. In particular, according to parliamentary resolutions, the right to hold dignitary offices and to tenure Crown lands was not to be obtained by the third generation, while a candidate was required to be a Roman Catholic. More importantly, his *indygenat* granted by the gentry of Courland was not confirmed by the Polish-Lithuanian Parliament. Brühl's desire to participate actively in the political life of Poland then required more conclusive evidence. With considerable assistance from the Czartoryskis, he elaborated a fictitious account of his family's Polish origin as the descendants of the noble family Ocieski. In February 1749, he obtained an affirmative decision from the Crown Tribunal, which granted him rights to the estate Brylewo as its direct and legal heir. The counterfeit genealogy introduced him as a descendent of Jan Brühl, courtier to a daughter of King Casimir IV Jagiellon, Barbara, who married George the Bearded, Duke of Saxony, in 1496. While Jan emigrated to Dresden, came into possession of Gangloffsömmern in Thüringen, and gave rise to the Saxon line of the family, his brother Uriel remained in Poland and took the name Ocieski after his principal estate at Ocieszyn¹¹. With the decision of the tribunal, Brühl obtained legal confirmation of his status as a Polish noble – he was "restored" to the Polish nobility. It was reported by the press¹² and Brühl felt absolved from further action towards its legalization. Immediately he assumed the title of a Count of Ocieszyn, and amended his family coat of arms by attaching the Ocieski heraldic design in the centre of the shield. From then on, he applied this compound coat of arms to indicate his possession, e. g. to his engraved portraits, publications aimed at propagating his collections (painting gallery, library) or in the pediments of newly erected buildings, such as the Belvedere in Dresden.

This strategic success became the turning point in pursuit of his career in the Commonwealth. Brühl was immediately granted the Crown lands (*starostwo*) of Bolimów and Lipnik, and awarded the prominent function of a general of the artillery of the Polish Crown. Furthermore,



1 Franz Leopold Schmittner **Heinrich Brühl's fictive family tree proving his Polish ancestry**, 1757, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (AGAD) Warszawa, Zbiór tablic genealogicznych Oddziału III, fol. 1

it allowed him to plan the future of his children in Poland, arranging beneficial matches with influential magnate families and securing profitable posts¹³. In 1750, his eldest son, twelve-year-old Alois Friedrich, was named Starost (an administrative official) of Warsaw, which caused general public outrage because of his young age. However, the issue of Brühl's noble status aroused opposition almost from the beginning and emerged as one of the major issues of public debate in the Commonwealth in the 1750s and early 1760s. Its illegality was raised by the minister's opponents, and it soon became an important argument in a war of pamphlets, satirical verses, or even public manifestos aimed at discrediting the minister and his policy toward both Poland and Saxony¹⁴. Eventually, in October 1762, it directly affected his son Alois Friedrich's career as a deputy in the Parliament, when he was accused of an abuse (as not being a Polish noble) and forced to leave the proceedings¹⁵.

Brühl's artistic activities following *indygenat* constantly conveyed the message of the legitimacy of his rights to participate in the Commonwealth's politics, becoming tools in his struggle. They ranged from commissioning representations certifying his noble rank and the Polish roots of his family, through maps illustrating his patronage of science or economy to the construction of admirable palaces. Three family trees displaying his genealogical chart seem meaningful in this context; they fashioned Brühl as "os de ossibus nostris"¹⁶ by introducing him as a direct descendant of the ancient Ocieski house. The first¹⁷ employed the symbolism of an oak tree – a traditional attribute of glory. The names of Heinrich's Polish patrilineal ancestors were put on its trunk, starting with Jan Brühl at the bottom and ending up with the minister and his children at the top. The whole was crowned with the compound coat of arms in a complete heraldic achievement, decorated with an Order of the White Eagle. Undated (ca. 1750 – 1754), it was engraved by Pierre Étienne Moitte, a French engraver, who worked as the principal author of the anthology of paintings from Brühl's celebrated collection in Dresden. The next two representations date to 1757, the period when public aversion towards the minister began to escalate. One was dedicated to Brühl by his patron and engraved in Vienna by Franz Leopold Schmittner¹⁸. The composition based on an oak tree was distinctly enriched by a figure of Heinrich at the top and an imaginary portrait of his illustrious ancestor Jan at the bottom, shown here as a sleeping Sarmatian knight ([fig. 1](#)). In addition, it presents a panegyric inscription, in which the antiquity and importance of Brühl's family in Poland were praised along with his dedication to his ministerial duties. These included the recommendation of decent people to the king, his prerogative that was most criticized for bringing corruption. Unlike the two former plates in the form of individual circulars, the latter one illustrated a widely read armorial book by Stanisław Duńczewski, who elaborated a comprehensive genealogy of the Ocieski and Brühl family ([fig. 2](#))¹⁹. Despite its poorer artistic level, the representation conveys a highly glorifying quality, which describes the minister as the light (splendour) of the two nations. The large representation of the coat of arms is flanked by two columns, bearing, respectively, the heraldic designs of Brühl's Polish and Saxon ancestors. Each of them carries an allegoric figure indicating military and civil authorities, provided with mottos: "Lucet/ utroque" ("It shines in both directions", or "It shines equally"). The entire composition is crowned by a figure of Fame with the inscription: "Arma virumque cano"

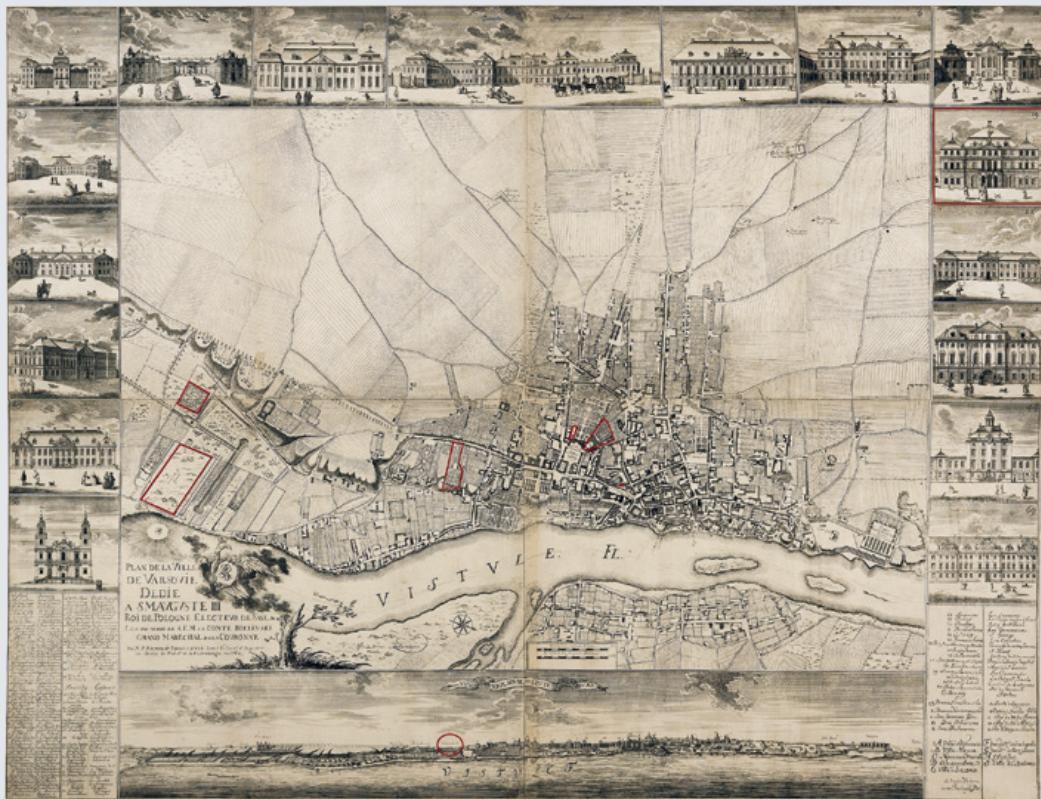
("I praise both armour and man"), while she carries a banderole with the phrase: "Convenere Domus quarum lectissimus Orbi / Sanguis erat Lechico et Saxonum gloria Gentis" ("Here the houses came together: one of the excellent Polish blood, the other – of Saxon people's glory"). To support this message, a socle bears sentences fictitiously attributed to the Roman poets Propertius, Statius, and Lucan, related to the magnificent legacy guaranteed by virtuous and glorious family descent.

Likewise in the Electorate, where Brühl boasted three dozen estates along with an impressive art collection to appropriately represent his position as prime minister, the visual magnificence of his Polish residences could appeal to people's minds and evoke the desired image of their owner. The notion of *Magnificentia principis* was commonly linked to splendour and majesty; luxury became a useful investment, which gave social, if not political gains, and was then perceived as a clear statement of success²⁰. Here Brühl employed well-recognized architects associated with the royal construction office – Carl Friedrich Pöppelmann (1750–1752) and Johann Friedrich Knöbel²¹, whom he probably relocated from Dresden in 1753 and assisted in taking over the Warsaw *Bauamt* as its director. In their Polish projects, the count and countess undoubtedly employed or referred to existing designs for their Saxon estates, chiefly by Johann Christoph Knöffel²². The mingled influence of the French-oriented Pöppelmann and Knöffel can be traced in several designs by Knöbel, a pupil of the latter; one of pavilions conceived for St. Joseph's Pond Garden at Wola took form of octagonal two-storey building with a circular salon inside and four annexes ("Molino da vento"), which were designed "en berceau". It resembles the forms of the Petit Salon elaborated by Pöppelmann in the Queen's Garden at the Saxon Garden²³, at the same time, particularly in linking brick and "green" architecture and the shape of a mansard roof, it is similar to Knöffel's Belvedere in Dresden.

Brühl arranged his domain in Poland following a well-established architectural tradition and borrowing its patterns. It consisted of a self-sustaining network of properties in and around Warsaw, carefully set up in terms of function and representation. It turned out to be particularly important after 1756, when with the outbreak of the Seven Years' War he was forced to abandon Dresden and reside permanently in the capital of the Polish realm. In 1762 Brühl and his wife Maria Anna (née von Kolowrat-Krakowsky) possessed a magnificent residence on Wierzbowa Street; a pleasure garden on the outskirts of town at Nowy Świat; and a suburban residence in Wola, with a kind of private town accompanying a complex of mansion, ornamental gardens, and grange, which supplied provisions for the Warsaw household. In addition, they owned combined hunting lodges and *maisons de plaisance* in nearby Piaseczno and Męciny; a terraced house for rental on Kozia Street; and two plots of ground at the park of Ujazdów²⁴. Mapping the location of these estates around Warsaw, the system tightly grasps the city (fig. 3). Brühl's principal residence was located in the immediate proximity of the private royal residence called the Saxon or Electoral Palace; together they composed the "Saxon Quarter" in the very core of Warsaw²⁵. Other estates were situated in particularly advantageous locations in terms of logistics, along the main communication routes leading out of the city towards the south, west, and north.



2 Jan Kanty Siarczyński (engraver): Symbolic representation of Brühl's pedigree chart in the armorial by Stanisław Duńczewski, 1757, Biblioteka Narodowa, sign. G.2092



3 Pierre Ricaud de Tirregaille and G.J. Marsteller

Brühl's estates indicated on the map of Warsaw, 1762 (*Plan de la ville de Varsovie: dedie a S. M. Auguste III Roi de Pologne, Electeur de Saxe etc. etc., levé par ordre de S. E. M. le Comte Bielinski Grand Marechal de la Couronne*), Biblioteka Narodowa, sign. ZZK 36 590

Brühl's individual decisions regarding location, arrangement, or hidden agendas of his estates should be explained through their socio-political and urbanistic-architectural background. The logic of Brühl's activities as a patron in Poland is marked by two stages. The first belongs to the period immediately after *indygenat* as a crucial event for forming the minister's residential system, when he received the right to own land and could only begin to emulate Polish magnates in their strategies of *Magnificentia*. This phase can be described as filled with land investments and numerous architectural plans, but with few executed projects. The second stage began after 1756, when he was forced to settle permanently in Warsaw. This prolonged residence entirely changed the purpose of his Polish domain, which turned out to be a necessity and not just a luxury or socio-cultural pose.

Under the Wettin dynasty, the rhythm of life in the Polish capital was marked by the presence of the royal court. Although the specifics of the Polish-Saxon union obliged the single figure of prince-elector and king to divide his presence between both capitals, there is no doubt that by October 1756 Augustus III, to whom Brühl was a constant companion, limited his stays in Warsaw to the necessary minimum. Starting from the turn of 1733 and 1734, the king visited Poland only ten times during his thirty-year reign, residing in Warsaw around twelve years all together, whereas two longer stays resulted from the international political situation. More than half of the total period occurred as a result of the Prussian occupation of Saxony (1756–1763), while an earlier twenty-month sojourn was associated with the War of the Polish Succession (1734–1736). Apart from these periods, individual visits did not last longer than five to six months²⁶. Thus, the statistics likewise illustrate Brühl's presence in Warsaw, and are also a real factor determining his activities in the field of architecture. He spent several months here every two years: carnival days in the winter or pre-parliamentary weeks in the summer and early autumn. It is an important factor that decisively affected the character of his residential network developed in and around Warsaw by the time of the Seven Years' War and formed its essence to a considerable extent.

Acting as the king's "eye, ear and hand"²⁷, Brühl resided near the monarch; he never left his patron's side. He limited access to the king offering him a kind of splendid isolation, while at the same time providing him with all the entertainments. The problem "comment amuser le roi" remained his constant concern²⁸. This partly explains the distinctive character of most of his estates as sites for recreation. It also, among other things, illuminates the fact why his estates were only located in Warsaw and its suburbs: he neither invested in nor undertook any architectural projects in the provinces, even if he purchased some property, for instance, in Wielkopolska (Greater Poland)²⁹ and administered several state lands, which generated substantial income for him³⁰.

This particular situation explains why Brühl did not attempt to establish a magnificent private palace in Warsaw as his principal residence in the Commonwealth before 1756. As a result, it was the final residence within his network. Initially, during the first stay in Warsaw until April 1736, the royal family lived at the castle along with their favourites³¹. Subsequently, the minister had an apartment and office in the Saxon Palace, remaining constantly at the monarch's service. After enlargement of the palace (1745), he had the new southern wing³² at his disposal together with an adjacent part of the Saxon Garden, separated from the rest of the complex. This section, referred to as "Der Ministerin Gräfin von Brühl Garten", took the form of an elongated garden segment parallel to the central axis of the Saxon residence and located on the site of a former private garden of Augustus II³³. In this way, the countess's pleasure ground created a pendant to the Queen's Garden situated on the opposite side. It was isolated from the main parterre and essentially consisted of every fashionable Rococo element: embroidery, bosquet cabinets, espaliers, and trelliswork.

When in 1750 Brühl succeeded in purchasing a mansion in the very heart of Warsaw, his choice fell on the Sanguszko Palace (Sandomierski Palace)³⁴, located in direct proximity to the Saxon residence. However, the modernization of the existing building into an opulent, princely

complex “entre cour et jardin” was not finally undertaken until at least 1758, with the significant participation of his wife who mostly engaged herself in composing fashionable interiors³⁵. Of more than thirty ambitious designs drawn up around 1752–1754 by prominent architects employed in the Royal *Bauamt* in Warsaw (Johann Daniel Jauch, Johann Sigmund Deybel, Knöbel) none was developed³⁶. The minister was, strangely enough, at the peak of his powers in these years. Certainly, the reason why the project was not undertaken can be attributed to the enormous expenses related to Brühl’s architectural operations in Saxony at that time or, rather, to him assigning a lower priority to his Polish estates. It is striking that before the involuntary removal to Warsaw the minister, in some measure, aptly used the king’s *Magnificentia* assigned to expression of power for his own needs.

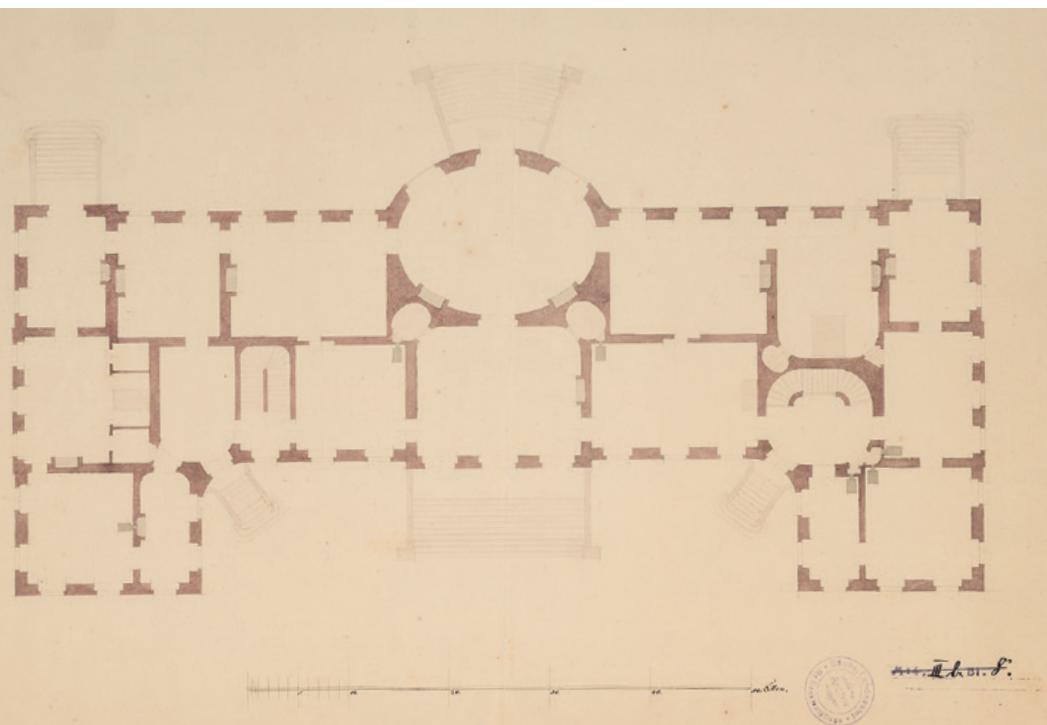
Brühl’s early activities as an architectural patron included construction of modest, but comfortable suburban seats in Crown lands at Piaseczno, Słupno and Młociny³⁷, situated near large wooded areas on different sides of the city and on two banks of the Vistula River; they were intended as retreats and hunting lodges for the use of both the royal family and himself. Furthermore, the construction and furnishing were carried out at the monarch’s expense. His early private acquisitions included gardens on the outskirts of Warsaw: at Nowy Świat and Ujazdów. While the first expresses a fashionable need for seclusion primarily for the use of his wife, the latter illustrates Brühl’s policy towards investments in Warsaw. In 1748, he succeeded in acquiring an allotment situated beneath the southern fragment of the Vistula escarpment, on the grounds of the Ujazdów residence³⁸. The picturesque values of the site encouraged Augustus II to arrange his suburban seat here, yet plans to expand the estate were only partially accomplished. Augustus III treated it primarily as hunting grounds. We may suspect that Brühl arranged here his small formal garden inside a natural park as a modest *Lustgarten* and a place for the monarch’s repose. The quadrangular site was marked by a canal, creating a small island covered with a bosquet, and the garden had the character of an independent enclave. The plan of Warsaw from 1762 also noted another large, yet undeveloped adjacent parcel in Brühl’s possession, undoubtedly acquired around 1756, when the property that originally belonged to the town district of Solec was divided into plots and sold³⁹. Certainly, Brühl considered his possessions at Ujazdów as a capital investment, and meanwhile he could plan to take over the entire estate, given the king’s lack of interest.

The garden at Nowy Świat⁴⁰ took its place within a long chain of estates stretching south on the Vistula escarpment along Krakowskie Przedmieście and Nowy Świat Streets. While earlier Baroque residences had ornamental gardens laid out on terraces descending to the level of the river, Brühl’s garden was more compact and its function was limited to an elegant intimate retreat. Despite early designs by C. F. Pöppelmann and Jauch, the layout was finally developed by Knöbel after 1754 with a wooden pavilion built no sooner than 1758. The property extended from the street to the top of the escarpment and had an elongated form. In the front, it opened with a small courtyard and farther to the back it was dominated by an alley of trees that divided sections of a utilitarian garden. In this way, the pleasure garden in the form of a bosquet to the

rear was secluded from the city. A small pavilion at the top of the escarpment served as a belvedere, which allowed the eye to sweep over the extensive river terrain. This visual encounter with landscape deliberately became a dominant component of the mansion's concept⁴¹. Młociny (after 1753, according to Knöbel's plans)⁴² should be classified as another example of exploiting the picturesque qualities of the location. It was characterized by the introduction of rules of French Baroque planning into natural landscape, filling it with a sense of order. An axial layout linked the mansion to the village and to the royal hunting grounds. The mansion itself was situated at the top of the Vistula escarpment and equipped with a terraced formal garden. Although the entrance to the palace was located in the southern façade, the northern one functioned as its main façade, open towards the river and crowned with a pediment bearing the coats of arms of Brühl and his wife. Not only did this design express the idea of opening views towards the landscape, but it also apparently took into account the proper perception of the palace from the river.

However, in terms of function and importance for self-fashioning probably the most interesting of all Brühl's estates was Wola, purchased already at the end of 1746, but developed around 1748–1750 according to designs by Pöppelmann and further expanded by Knöbel⁴³. This suburban seat could be considered a miniature version of a well-managed domain, as well as a substitute for the family's ancestral manor. It seems probable that the mansion existed already in 1750 in a form that allowed it to be considered a fully self-sustained estate. At that time, the minister needed a substitute ancestral residence for the sake of his young son, Alois Friedrich, already "recognized" as Polish⁴⁴. Alois Friedrich took the office of Starost of Warsaw in September 1750, and his father arranged a lavish celebration of the inauguration, which took place at Warsaw Castle, while the ceremonial procession departed from Wola.

The concept and layout of Wola alluded both to the local tradition of country seats of the Polish nobility and western European (mostly French) models of the *maison de plaisance* or *maison de campagne* type. The mansion was arranged in an axial *entre court et jardin* disposition, with the manor as the predominant building. It consisted of a one-storey wooden house accompanied by a forecourt framed by outbuildings and divided into *avant-cour* and *cour d'honneur*. The small ornamental garden at the back offered varied forms and recreational functions; it bore a structure of transverse elements linked to the central allée, with a separate parterre flanked by *berceaux* and bosquets with cabinets. The designs also included pavilions, such as a house for bowling and an orangery. Later on, the complex was to be complemented by an isolated garden – hermitage – located near the road to Warsaw, called New Garden or St. Joseph's Pond, with a large pavilion situated on an isle surrounded by canals. French models, clearly apparent both in the overall axial structure and in the garden details⁴⁵, can also be traced in the disposition of a house. The plan of an elongated main block with side pavilions extending forward, large central oval salon projecting from the rear elevation and two rows of chambers certainly dates back to the tradition of Vaux-le-Vicomte, though it finds more analogies in the layouts of *maisons de campagne* published by Charles-Etienne Briseaux⁴⁶. This type of plan was also employed by Knöffel for Brühl's country estates in Saxony, however on a monumental scale

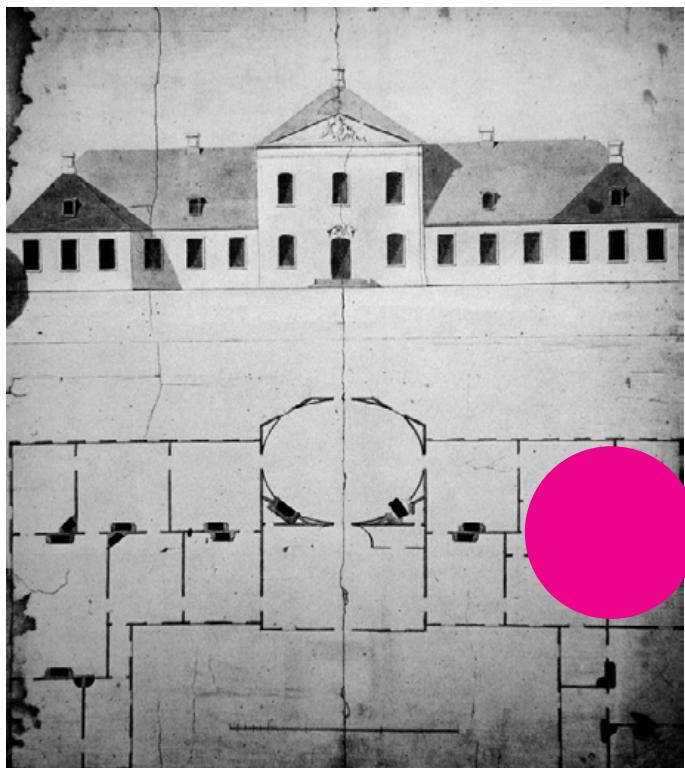


4 Johann Christoph Knöffel's design for Brühl's palace in Grochwitz, circa 1751, LDS, PS, inv. no. M 14 IIIb Bl. 8

adapted to the vast three-storey palaces. Comparing Pöppelmann's plan with Knöffel's one of Grochwitz from around 1751, one sees that their similarities are striking (fig. 4)⁴⁷. In contrast, the volumes of the Wola house turn to entirely different forms, which refer to traditional Polish manors. A compound block of a one-storey corps rising to two storeys in the centre was covered with a high gable roof, and with separate lower roofs atop the annexes, which here adopted features of *alkierz*, an apartment feature of manors (fig. 5). The use of wood (plastered to give the impression of a brick building) was an additional reference to this architectural tradition: it was considered not only "indigenous", but also to promote health and comfort. Inspiration from traditional Polish architecture can also be observed in the designs for houses in Piaseczno and Młociny⁴⁸.

The manor house in the form of a country estate developed in the seventeenth century became the symbol of Polish local architecture and at the same time an attribute of the landed nobility. Applying "national" rules in accordance with local practices and codified in popular publications on rural economy allowed the Polish nobility to live "in the Polish manner"⁴⁹. Wola

5 BU fehlt noch



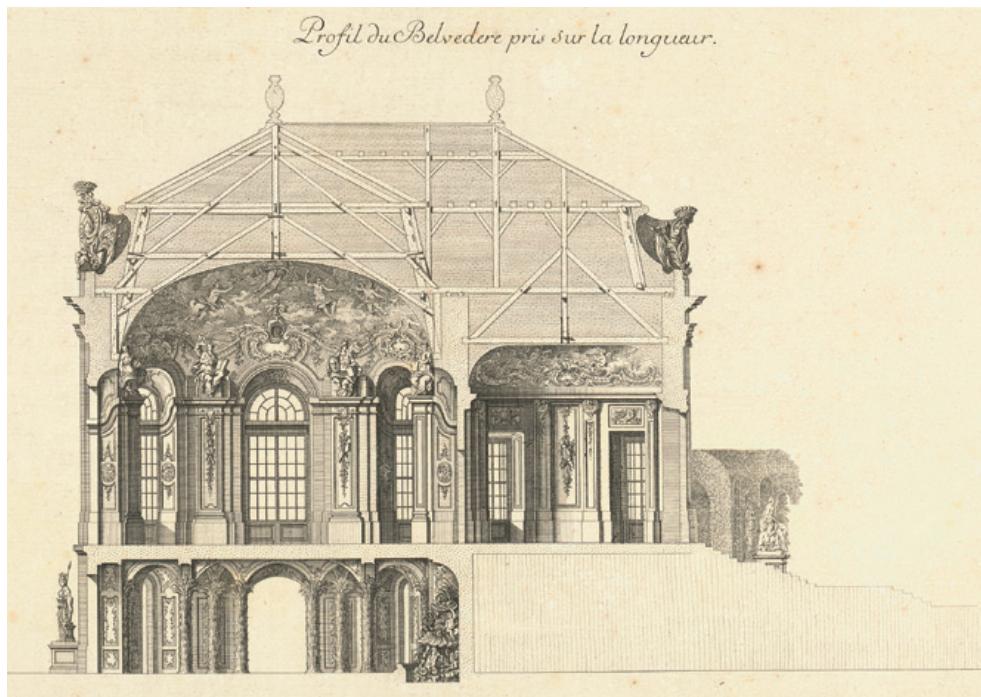
thus reflects Brühl's attempt to appear as a member of Polish nobility by having an "Old Polish" mansion, which we should understand not so much as an expression of his artistic tastes, but rather as a political project. This provides an excellent sociological case study of how a designated Polish noble born in Thuringia adapted to the "national" culture of his new homeland⁵⁰.

However, Wola was not only a mansion accompanied by economic facilities. Designs by the minister's architects provided proposals for developing an existing nearby village into a town-like settlement. At the time, Brühl was undertaking considerable urban projects in Saxony according to classical principles of planning, erecting the "ideal" town of Pforzen or rebuilding the town of Forst, clearly parts of his self-fashioning as a patron of beautiful order⁵¹. Although the scope of investment in Wola cannot be compared with these Saxon towns, nonetheless this important project suggests a parallel intention. In this Brühl echoed the urban planning activities of Polish magnates, which were intensified in the first half of the 18th century⁵². Even more important for Brühl's efforts to create his identity as a Pole, he commissioned construction of the church of St. Lawrence in the settlement. The modest church by Knöbel, founded by Queen Maria Casimira Sobieska, was finished in 1755 and completed with a Rococo interior. Supported by his Catholic wife, this clever act of a Lutheran to promote the predominant confession could be warmly welcomed by public opinion.



6 Brühl's palace at Wierzbowa Street, decoration of the main entrance,
Johann Chrisostom Redler, 1759 (watercolour by Zygmunt Vogel, 1786, lost)

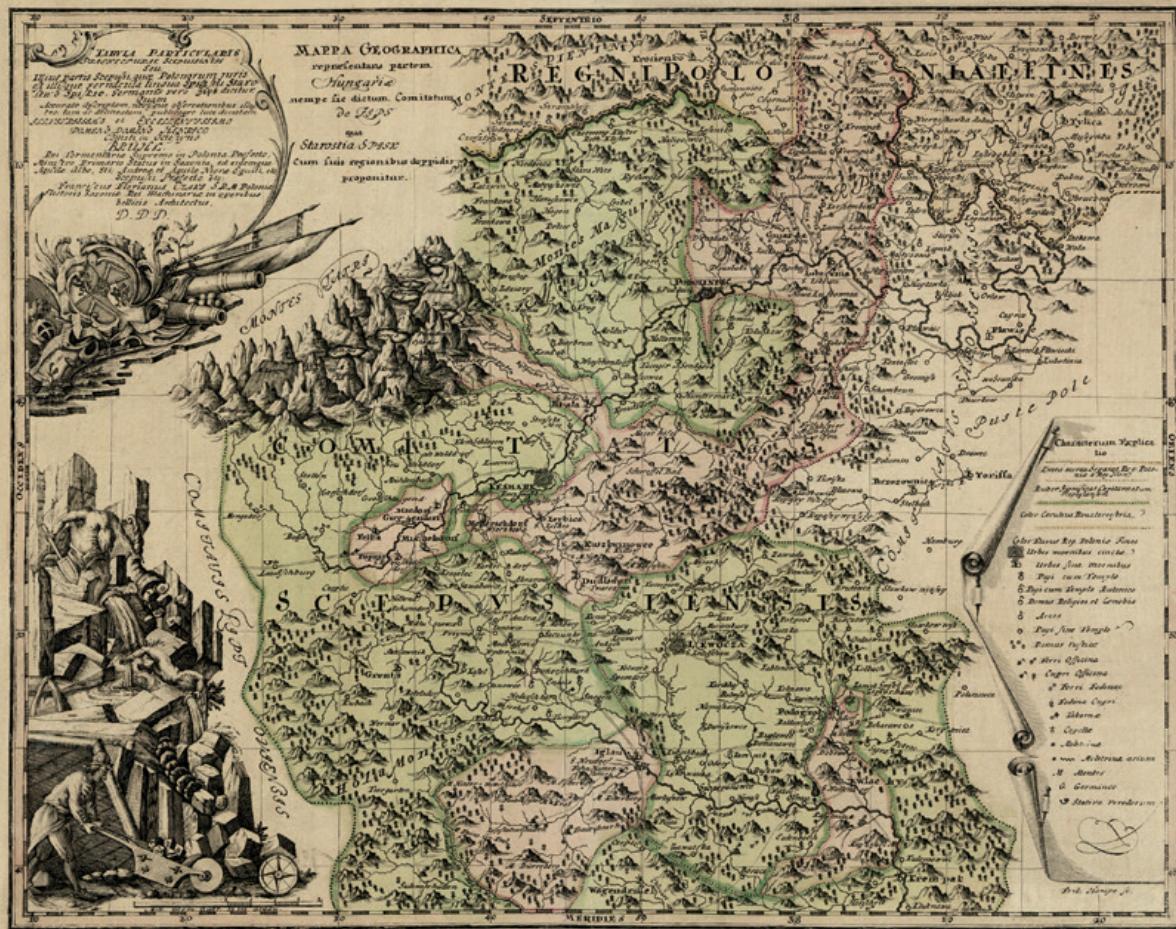
Finally, we should direct our attention to the city palace in Wierzbowa Street as the climax of Brühl's artistic activities in Poland⁵³. Its considerable enlargement completed in 1759 – 1760 according to designs by Knöbel affected not only the main block, but above all rearranged its surroundings into an impressive scenographic space. The predilection for elegant Rococo interiors, with a significant role assigned to comfort as a necessary feature of a modern palace "dans le goût françois", should be credited to Countess Maria Anna. While she longed for her palace to be "une des plus comodes et plus belles d'ici"⁵⁴, manifesting by that very fact her desire to emulate other sumptuous residences in Warsaw, Brühl probably concentrated on its scale and exterior visual impact, which makes him a master of the "spectacle of power". The grand, but muted effect guaranteed by the arrangement of the forecourts undoubtedly dominated the reception of the palace, providing it with an unquestionable sense of magnificence. The palace was closely linked to the royal estate, thus the relations between the owners would not even be questioned; the private minister's residence was located to the right of the monarch's compound (the monarch's "right hand"), while its left wing still housed Brühl's office. The rear elevation of the count's palace was furnished with an inscription: "Ausp[iciis] Aug[usti]



7 Interior decoration of Brühl's Belvedere in Dresden

(Michel Keyl: Belvedere que S. E. Monseigneur le Premier Ministre Comte de Brühl fit bâti l'an 1751 cet ornement de Dresde précieux modèle de l'architecture détruit de fond en comble par ordre de S. M. le Roi de Prusse l'an 1759, Dresden 1761, fragment of the fig. 5

III Reg[is] O[mnium] P[olonorum] Pal[atium] Hoc Rest[auravit] Henr[icus] Comes in Oscieszyno Brühl MDCLIX⁵⁵, that revealed Brühl's relation to the king, and also the magnanimous concept of restauration. Furthermore, the symbolic programme introduced by the sculpted decoration should be recognized in this specific situation of increasing hostility towards Brühl as an apt means of his political response. The aversion towards the minister reached its peak in the public memorial offered to the king on 14 April 1758 and then widely distributed⁵⁶. The criticism concerned his corruption and abuse of the king's right to grant tenures (which he monitored) while primarily denouncing the minister's relentless ambition. In these circumstances Brühl, accused of abuses of power, dispensed with explicit declaration of power in his palace. Instead, he resorted to more neutral messages, in which he presented himself as a chaste patron of arts and sciences, or as a universally celebrated *honnête homme*⁵⁷. Sculpted personifications of virtues at the façade (by Pierre Coudray) were accompanied by *Artes Mechanicae* and *Artes Liberales* (by Johann Chrisostom Redler, 1759) on the pillars of the front gate (fig. 6); they operated both within the universal Baroque language of glorification and as allusions to Brühl's virtues and patronage. Yet this not only suggested that the minister was a dedicated protector of art, for



8 Map of Spisz dedicated to Brühl (*Tabula particularis praefecturae Scepsiensis: seu illius partis Scepsii, quae Polonorum juris est illisque vernacula lingua Spisz seu Starostwo Spiskie, Germanis vero Zips dicitur : quam [...] Henrico Comiti in Ociezyno Brühl [...] Franciscus Florianus Czaki [...] D.D.D.*), engraved by Friedrich Hampe, circa 1757–1759, Biblioteka Narodowa Warszawa, sign. ZZK 1 562

whom Francesco Algarotti and Carl Heinrich von Heineken coined the moniker Saxon Maece-nas⁵⁸, but also made the palace a substitute (or compensation) for his Dresden residence on the Elbe. It was to become a compensation for the Belvedere, ruined during the same year 1759, with statues on the front gate being variations on the subject of the Belvedere's interior decoration (the Muses of Parnassus as allegories of the arts and sciences; palms, etc.) (fig. 7).

In the context of Brühl's activities aimed at creation of his positive image as an enlightened patron of science and development, it is worth paying attention to two cartographic works. Maps of Żuławy Wiślane (the Vistula mouth, 1753) by the royal mathematician Johann Friedrich Endersch, and of the Crown land of Spiš (ca. 1757–1759) by the eminent cartographer Franciszek Florian Czaki were issued in Elbing (Elbląg) by the etcher Friedrich Hampe⁵⁹. Both bore dedications to Brühl with words that celebrated his patronage. The large coloured maps were carefully drawn to offer both visual and conceptual content. Because of numerous inscriptions, heraldic allusions, and imagery along with the minister's full titles, they present a dual semantic nature – a scientific one and that of printed propaganda images. Particularly the map of Spiš (fig. 8), representing the second most lucrative Crown land in terms of income, again raises the question of the legitimacy of Brühl's position as its lawful possessor. The *Starostwo* of Spiš, traditionally an endowment of queens, was delegated by Maria Józefa to Brühl, who officially took over the estate after the death of the queen in 1757⁶⁰. Spiš, rich in valuable minerals, had mines of silver, copper and iron ores, as well as the related industry of steel mills and forges. The monarch's decision to award the prime minister this profitable land following his earlier disposal to grant him superintendence of the royal incomes met with the lively opposition of magnates, expressed in the manifesto from 1758 mentioned above⁶¹. Brühl was to bear full responsibility for the catastrophic monetary crisis racking Poland, as he introduced counterfeit money minted abroad in the country; the manifesto represented the opinion that Brühl allegedly had a "secret mint" in Spiš where he counterfeited coins⁶². The map with its agenda was doubtless meant as a countermeasure in this war of pamphlets.

It is not easy to assess Brühl's activities as an architectural patron in Poland fairly, although they undoubtedly had features of artistic policies employed to promote himself politically. They did not ever achieve the impact of the Saxon ones, yet his wealth and demonstrative extravagance – also represented in his Warsaw estates – became a subject of public comment. Not only did it cause many charges of corruption; it is significant that within Brühl's notorious reputation, the notion of splendour and pomp attributed to the minister was often compared to the mythic Asiatic ostentation, clearly giving it a pejorative meaning⁶³. Furthermore, even his true attitude to Poland and his status there is difficult to judge. Brühl's "galante" exchange of letters with Duchess Maria Antonia Walpurgis, wife to Friedrich Christian, represented the height of cynicism about Warsaw and Poland in general⁶⁴. Mindful of his struggle to be like a Pole, this made him a perfect actor.

Anmerkungen

- 1 KRAZEWSKI 1875, 7.
- 2 STASZEWSKI 1989, 202.
- 3 The minister was portrayed as such in a diary by Marcin Matuszewicz from 1714 – 1764 (KRÓLIKOWSKI/ZIELIŃSKA 1986) or memoirs by Jędrzej Kitowicz, collected in 1743 – 1798 (MATUSZEWSKA/LEWINÓWNA 1971).
- 4 KURAS 2012, 305 – 331.
- 5 JUSTI J.G. 1760 – 1764.
- 6 TREMBECKI 1836, 71.
- 7 KONOPCZYŃSKI 1909 – 1911, *passim*; KONOPCZYŃSKI 1937.
- 8 STASZEWSKI 1989, 199 – 215, 227.
- 9 PRZYACIEL 1839, (VI, 20) 156 – 158; BOROVICZÉNY 1930, 97; HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 323.
- 10 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 325.
- 11 MATUSZEWSKA/LEWINÓWNA 1971, 59 – 60; MALINOWSKI 1844, 110 – 111; PRZYACIEL 1839, (VI, 20), 156 – 158; STASZEWSKI 1989, 218 – 219; HEN 2011, 23 – 25.
- 12 *Kuryer Polski*, 1749, no. 639, 25. 2. 1749 (current news on the events in the country)
- 13 In 1750, Brühl's daughter Maria Amalia married the court marshal of the Polish crown, Jerzy Wandalin Mniszech, while his eldest son, Alois Friedrich, married Maria Klementyna Potocka in 1760. In the late 1750s, the minister began to pass administration of state lands to his sons (POLSKI 1900, 157; ZIELIŃSKA 1977, 41, 109, 116). In his letter to Carl Heinrich von Heineken, Brühl interpreted his actions in Poland as "je fais tout pour mes enfants" (SCHMIDT O. E. 1921, 316).
- 14 Cf. note 4.
- 15 As a result, the court fraction broke the Sejm while Augustus III appointed Alois Friedrich General of the Crown Artillery to emphasize that he considered him a Pole (DJARIUSZ 1844).
- 16 Cf. BUW, Ms. 100, fols. 215 – 216 v.: Excerpt z listu z Brodów; KURAS 2012, 320.
- 17 BNW, G.68095/Sz.4: *Arbor gentilitia illustrorum comitum de Ocieszyno Brühl gentis in Regno Poloniae avita nobilitatae paeclarae*.
- 18 AGAD, Zbiór tablic genealogicznych Oddziału III, fol.1: *Arbor gentilitia illustrorum comitum de Ocieszyno Brühl*.
- 19 DUNĘCEWSKI 1757, 145 – 153; the engraving is by Jan Kanty Siarczyński.
- 20 OBERLI 1999, 21 – 35; MIŁOBĘDZKI 1994, 153.
- 21 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 75 – 76, 324, 327, 333 – 336, 366 – 370; MAY 1980, 199; MAY 1997, 25.
- 22 Information on delivery of plans of different Saxon gardens comes from Brühl's correspondence with Heineken (SCHMIDT O. E. 1921, 291).
- 23 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 335 – 336, fig. 452.
- 24 Basic information on Brühl's estates in Poland and publication of numerous architectural designs housed in the Dresden archives cf. HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 323 – 378, vol. 2, figs. 431 – 517. The idea of viewing the minister's property as a residential network, however deprived of any wider context, can be found in PUTKOWSKA 2010, 139, 145.
- 25 In 1750 Brühl bought another piece of property at Wierzbowa Street where he erected a palace presented to his son, Alois Friedrich, as a wedding gift in 1760 (HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 378 – 383, vol. 2, figs. 518 – 526). In addition, Brühl purchased Łomianki and Węgrów in Mazovia, but soon disposed of them.
- 26 ŻÓRAWSKA-WITKOWSKA 2012, 57, 58 – 62.
- 27 KONOPCZYŃSKI 1937, 17.
- 28 Cf. his letters to Heineken (SCHMIDT O. E. 1921, 294 – 296).
- 29 POLSKI 1900, 157.
- 30 In the 1750s, Brühl was presumed the fourth richest beneficiary of Crown lands, situated in Mazovia (Piaseczno, Bolimów, Kampinos, Błonie), Lesser Poland (Spiš, Lipnik), Voivodships of Sieradz, Inowrocław (Bydgoszcz) and Pomerania (POLSKI 1900, 155 – 157; ZIELIŃSKA 1977, 116, 134, 180).
- 31 ŻÓRAWSKA-WITKOWSKA 2012, 75.
- 32 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 323. He retained the apartment until 1760 even though he already had his own palace completed.
- 33 Perspective view from ca. 1750, in: LNSL, *Album of Poturzyca*, pl. 19; HStADD, XXXVI, no. 9, *Plan General du Palais, Jardin, Offices e Ecuries du Sa Majeste à Varsovie*, ca. 1745; HStADD, VII, 87, no. 7 b 2, *Plan Général du Palais de S. A. S. l'Electeur de Saxe à Varsovie*, 1765.

34 KONARSKI 1915, 23; HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 354.

35 KONARSKI 1915, 34–36; SCHMIDT O. E. 1921, 291, 307.

36 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 358–368; SITO 2007, 132; SITO 2014, 92–93.

37 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 329–331, 336–340, 340–341, respectively.

38 TATARKEWICZ 1957, 103–104, referred to as the garden “Zazdrość”; HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 328–329; MAJDECKI 1969, 22–24, 26–28.

39 MAJDECKI 1969, 29.

40 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 325–328; MAJDECKI 1973, 232; AK WARSCHAU/GROSSEDLITZ 1997, 50; PUTKOWSKA 2010, 140, 145.

41 OLEŃSKA 2007, 108–109. SOKOŁOWSKA–GRZESZCZYK 1962, 124–130, 135–139; HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 336–340; AK WARSCHAU/GROSSEDLITZ 1997, 56; PUTKOWSKA 2010, 137. HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 331.

42 SOKOŁOWSKA–GRZESZCZYK 1962, 124–130, 135–139; HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 336–340; AK WARSCHAU/GROSSEDLITZ 1997, 56; PUTKOWSKA 2010, 137.

43 HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 1, 331–336; AK WARSCHAU/GROSSEDLITZ 1997, 55; PUTKOWSKA 2010, 145; TORBUS 2014 b, 78–79.

44 Evidence for this is given in a portrait by Andreas Möller (1742), who presented him dressed in Polish national costume.

45 Cf. similar forms in French manuals on gardening (DEZALLIER D'ARGENVILLE 1709, chapter 6, pl. 1–6; BLONDEL 1737–1738, vol. 2, pl. 7 and others).

46 BRISEAUX 1743, vol. 1, pls. 10–12, 15, 16, 27, 28, 43. Y

47 HStADD, VII, 91, 2 d: view of a façade and plan of the Wola mansion (cf. HENTSCHEL 1967, vol. 2, fig. 444); Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Dresden, M 14 IIIb Bl. 8: plan of a ground floor of the palace at Grochwitz, cf. MILTSCHUS 2014, illustrated on p. 106.

48 Architects employed by Brühl were not the first foreigners to adapt their projects to Polish architectural tradition. Wooden mansions were included in the design repertoire of professional architects, with an excellent example provided by Tylman van Gameren. Cf. MIŁOBĘDZKI 1994, 57; MOSSAKOWSKI 2012, 31–33.

49 MIŁOBĘDZKI 1980, 338, 341; LEŚNIAKOWSKA 1996, 17–23.

50 This interesting phenomenon was briefly mentioned in LILEJKO 1981, 134.

51 TORBUS 2014 b, 74–77; KLUSSMANN 2014, 120–131.

52 OLEŃSKA 2012, 209–223. For structures similar to Wola, cf. TRZEBIŃSKI 1962, 44–55.

53 Recently, cf. SITO 2007, 129–146; SITO 2014, 85–100.

54 The countess's letter to Heineken, 18. 7. 1759, cited in SCHMIDT O. E. 1921, 169.

55 Quoted in KONARSKI 1915, 37. The inscription was preserved until 1944 and the destruction of the palace.

56 BUW, Man. 99: Kopia memorialu jw. jmp. hetmana w. koronnego do króla (...), fols. 20–24.

57 The “honnête homme” was one of dominant role models for the aristocratic elite of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His primary goal was magnanimity of thought and deed, while his intentions were directed towards his own perfection. Cf. AUER 2010, 41; KOCH 2014 a, 231.

58 In the well-known painting by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, Brühl is to be recognized as a modern Maecenas (FASSL 2010, 61–63), the same is stated by Carl Heinrich von Heineken, in his introduction to *Recueil d'Estampes* 1754: “le vrai Mécène de la Saxe, on auroit ici une ample occasion de parler de son amour pour les belles Sciences & pour les arts liberaux, comme aussi de la protection généreuse, qu'il accorde aux savants & aux artistes”.

59 *Mapa geographica* 1757–1759. OLSZEWICZ 1932, 22; KOZICA 2004, cat. G83/2 (map of Żuławy), G70/1 (map of Spiš; dated around 1762).

60 POLSKI 1900, 157; ZIELIŃSKA 1977, 116.

61 STASZEWSKI 1989, 253–255.

62 Brühl designated Peter Nikolaus von Gartenberg as an administrator of Spiš. One of the closest confidants of the minister, he was a general mining commissioner (Generalbergkommissar) and a supervisor of the Saxon mining and metallurgy who specialized in the search for precious minerals; from 1761 he was the director of mines. In Spiš, he minted coins for the Polish market, although avoiding the Crown laws. KONOPCZYŃSKI 1948–1958; SCHMIDT G. 1964, 75; ZAWARTKO-LASKOWSKA 2008, 68–69.

63 E.g.: KONOPCZYŃSKI 1937, 19: “he was immersed in luxury which rarely took on the features of patronage”; On “Asiatic” luxury, probably after Justi's biography, cf. PRZYACIEL 1839, (VI, 20) 156–158; (VI, 21), 165–166. The number of people employed at Brühl's court was estimated at three hundred (STASZEWSKI 1989, 202).

64 ŹÓRAWSKA-WITKOWSKA 2012, 66–68.